

those computers and make sure they are not being used in the nuclear weapons complex. They have that right. Of the 191 supercomputers that were transferred to China in that 1-year period, they only checked on one supercomputer to make sure it was not being used to design nuclear weapons.

And lastly, Mr. Speaker, we have this case where these hard drives were taken out of this vault, and it has now been testified to that the vault custodian, the person who is supposed to identify that very small group of people who are allowed to come in, that vault custodian would sometimes leave for 2-hour time periods. This is the Clinton-Gore security gap. We have to close it with a clean sweep.

#### CURSE OF THE CAN-DO

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WHITFIELD). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 1999, the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, where I come from, in metropolitan Boston, generations of otherwise well-adjusted citizens have suffered from the ill effects of a well-known curse. It is referred to as the "Curse of the Bambino." Since the Red Sox traded Babe Ruth, life has never been quite the same, although I am one of those with deep quiet faith that the curse of the Bambino officially expires as we enter into the new millennium.

I would note, for my colleagues and friends, folks like Mr. Freedman, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA), and the gentleman from New York (Mr. SWEENEY), that if they check today's American League standings, they would find that the Yankees are in second place and the Red Sox are in first.

I rise today, however, Mr. Speaker, to discuss a different kind of curse. Call it the "Curse of the Can-Do." The curse afflicts the United States Coast Guard in its long proud tradition of never turning down a call for help, of never shirking new responsibility, even when the gas tank is literally on empty.

It is too late for the Red Sox to get Babe Ruth back, but we still have an opportunity to ensure the readiness of the Coast Guard to discharge its life-saving mission. So I take to the House floor to thank some colleagues who recently have helped lead us in that direction, but also to warn that we are still sailing into a very stiff wind.

Last month, the House took historic steps to shore up Coast Guard resources to save lives, to prevent pollution, to fight drugs, to help the economy, to respond to natural disasters, and to enhance national security. Now it is up to us to see these efforts through.

The fiscal year 2001 transportation appropriation bill, passed recently by the full House, would reverse more

than a decade of chronic underfunding that has made it nearly impossible, nearly impossible, for the Coast Guard to do the work the Congress has mandated that it do. For the first time in recent memory, there is now genuine hope that we can adequately safeguard the lives and livelihoods of those who live and work on or near the water, from the small harbors of New England to the ice flows of Alaska; from the Great Lakes to the gulf coast to the banks of the Mississippi.

I particularly want to commend the gentleman from Florida (Mr. YOUNG), the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, and the ranking member, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY); as well as the chairman of the Subcommittee on Transportation, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. SABO). Their leadership has underscored the stark fact that the demands on the Coast Guard have vastly outpaced its resources. There is no longer margin for error, and the consequence of any such error is literally a life and death matter.

Despite the fact that there are no more Coast Guard personnel today than there were in 1967, it is indisputable that day in and day out no public agency works harder or smarter. As a reminder, during the 1990s, the Coast Guard reduced its workforce by nearly 10 percent and operated within a budget that rose by only 1 percent in actual dollars. Actual dollars. Not dollars adjusted for inflation, but actual dollars. Over this period, it has also responded to a half million SOS calls, an average of approximately 65,000 each year, and, in the process, has saved 50,000 lives.

Every year the Coast Guard performs 50,000 inspections of U.S. and foreign merchant vessels. It ensures the safe passage of a million commercial vessels through our ports and waterways. Every year it responds to 13,000 reports of water pollution. Every year it inspects 1,000 offshore drilling platforms. Every year it conducts 12,000 fisheries enforcement boardings. And every year it prevents 100,000 pounds of cocaine from reaching American shores and infecting the streets and neighborhoods of our communities.

Two centuries of experience have taught us to rely on the professionalism, judgment, compassion, commitment and courage of the Coast Guard. From hurricane to airplane crashes; from drug smugglers to foreign factory trawlers, the Coast Guard is always, always, on call, just as it has been for some 200 years. We have learned to trust the Coast Guard with all we hold dear: our property, our natural resources, and our lives. In Washington, a long way from the sea and the wind and the whitecaps, it has been tempting to task the Coast Guard with new and multiple and burdensome missions. Far too tempting.

As co-chair of the Congressional Coast Guard Caucus, along with my

colleagues, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. COBLE) and the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. TAYLOR), I have had grave concerns for a long time. Most recently, much has been made of the demands on the Coast Guard for their work in the area of illegal drug interdiction. As a former prosecutor, I am all for fighting the drug war, and have fully supported calling upon the Coast Guard to step up its interdiction efforts, but not at the expense of its core mission, the saving of human lives.

We just cannot wish away the costs, and I am not ready to start treating search and rescue like a luxury we can do without, any more than we can move cops off the beat and then complain about street crime. We have stretched the Coast Guard so thin for so long that it can barely be expected to fulfill its credo, *Semper Paratus*, "Always Prepared." And there are scores and scores of new missions waiting in the wings.

This year, the Coast Guard was the only Federal agency to earn an A from the Independent Government Performance Project for operating with unusual efficiency and effectiveness. That assessment placed the Coast Guard at the very top of 20 executive branch agencies because, and I am quoting now, "because its top notch planning and performance budgeting overcame short staffing and fraying equipment." It all came down, they concluded, to what I mentioned earlier, the curse. The "Curse of the Can-Do." "The Coast Guard," they said, "is a can-do organization whose 'can' is dwindling while its 'do' is growing."

This just simply cannot continue, not when the average age of its deep water cutters is 27 years old, making this the second oldest naval fleet on the planet; not when fixed-wing aircraft deployments have more than doubled, and helicopter deployments are up more than 25 percent without any increase in the number of aircraft, pilots or crews; not when duty officers suffer chronic fatigue because staffing constraints permit only 4 hours of sleep at night; and not when the United States Coast Guard commandant testifies before Congress that there is not enough fuel to power the United States Coast Guard fleet; and not when the Coast Guard radio communication units are 30 years old, like the one described in a recent news account that began this way, and again I am quoting: "If you dial 911, say the word 'fire' and run outside, a fire engine will show up at your driveway. If you pick up the handset on your VHF-FM radio, say the word 'Mayday' and jump overboard, you could very well drown or die of hypothermia."

Study after study has documented these hazards. A recent interagency task force concluded that obsolescence presents a threat that the Coast Guard could soon be overwhelmed by a mismatch between its missions and the quantity and quality of the assets necessary to carry them out.

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A 1997 General Accounting Office review was even more blunt. It projected \$90 million in annual reductions in operating expenses just to bridge the gap. The GAO was alarmed by the sheer size of the gap and the dwindling number of available efficiency-related options.

Well, where I am from, a marine distress call is an urgent plea for emergency law enforcement and rescue personnel. When oil spills jeopardize economic as well as environmental resources, when frozen rivers trap heating oil barges, when the well-being of both fish and fishermen are threatened, when offshore danger strikes, we know where to turn, to the United States Coast Guard.

That is why when the ink dried on the House Department of Transportation appropriation, there was reason for new and genuine hope. It was like having Pedro Martinez in the starting rotation, it felt like this really could be the year.

Well, the bill approved recently for next year increases Coast Guard accounts by nearly \$600 million, a 15-percent boost. It also includes \$125 million to help modernize aging planes, helicopters, and motor lifeboats and upgrade rather than abandon Coast Guard stations in the communities that they serve.

Years from now, the 395 Members of this House who voted for that bill can look back and take satisfaction from the knowledge that they helped save a life, a coastal community, an international alliance, and maybe even a marine species or two. But that old curse still hovers over the Coast Guard, the curse of the "can do."

Just this week, the Senate came in at \$250 million less than the House appropriation. The timing could not be worse. The Senate action followed two recent rounds of Coast Guard cutbacks for the current fiscal year, reducing cutter days and flight hours by 10 percent.

I wonder if the men on the fishing vessel that are being rescued in this picture to my right would approve of a 10-percent reduction, meaning a slower response time. I ask my colleagues and the American people to reflect on this photo and the reduction that I just mentioned.

Why? Because the Coast Guard responded to natural disasters but the Congress failed to pass emergency supplemental funding and because a variety of overdue personnel benefits for everything from housing to health care were mandated by the current defense authorization but with no money to pay for those increased costs.

There is more. The good news is a new effort through the pending military construction bill to restore \$800 million in supplemental funds. But since only a third of that is designated as emergency expenses, the baseline for future Coast Guard budgets next year and beyond would be seriously compromised.

So I rise today to express gratitude for the progress made in this chamber so far but also to raise a warning flag about the two challenges immediately ahead.

Specifically, I urge my colleagues to hold firm in conference on the House approved allocation in the transportation appropriation bill and then to recede to Senate conferees regarding the \$800 million in the MILCON measure. That is what it will take for the Coast Guard to do the job we have assigned to it, to contain oil spills, to catch smugglers, and, most important of all, to save lives.

#### LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today after 12:00 p.m. on account of official business.

Mr. POMEROY (at the request of Mr. GEPHARDT) for today and June 26 on account of official business in the district.

Mr. CANADY of Florida (at the request of Mr. ARMEY) for today on account of attending a funeral.

#### SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. McDERMOTT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. ALLEN, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. McDERMOTT, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. STRICKLAND, for 5 minutes, today.

Mrs. CLAYTON, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at the request of Mr. TIAHRT) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. BURTON of Indiana, for 5 minutes, June 28.

Mr. FOLEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. SCHAFER, for 5 minutes, June 28.

Mr. SMITH of Michigan, for 5 minutes, today.

(The following Members (at their own request) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Mr. HOYER, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. HUNTER, for 5 minutes, today.

#### ADJOURNMENT

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to; accordingly (at 3 o'clock and 20 minutes p.m.), under its previous order, the

House adjourned until Monday, June 26, 2000, at 12:30 p.m., for morning hour debates.

#### EXECUTIVE COMMUNICATIONS, ETC.

Under clause 8 of rule XII, executive communications were taken from the Speaker's table and referred as follows:

8323. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, PACA Branch, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Perishable Agricultural Commodities Act: Recognizing Limited Liability Companies [Docket No. FV99-361] received May 5, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8324. A letter from the Congressional Review Coordinator, Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Asian Longhorned Beetle; Addition to Quarantined Areas [Docket No. 00-004-2] received May 15, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8325. A letter from the Associate Administrator, Agricultural Marketing Service, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Department of Agriculture, transmitting the Department's final rule—Raisins Produced From Grapes Grown in California; Increase in Compensation Rate for Handlers' Services Performed Regarding Reserve Raisins [Docket No. FV00-989-2 FR] received May 15, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Agriculture.

8326. A letter from the Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting a draft bill, "to provide a safety net to protect agricultural producers from short-term market and production fluctuations, to encourage conservation practices, and for other purposes"; to the Committee on Agriculture.

8327. A letter from the Federal Register Liaison Officer, Office of Thrift Supervision, Department of the Treasury, transmitting the Department's final rule—Transfer and Repurchase of Government Securities [No. 2000-43] (RIN: 1550-AB38) received May 10, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Banking and Financial Services.

8328. A letter from the Acting Deputy Assistant Secretary for Labor-Management Standards, Employment Standards Administration, transmitting the Administration's final rule—Labor Organization Annual Financial Reports (RIN: 1215-AB29) received April 28, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

8329. A letter from the Director, Office of Regulatory Management and Information, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting the Agency's final rule—Revocation of Significant New Use Rules for Certain Chemical Substances [OPPTS-50637A; FRL-6555-8] (RIN: 2070-AB27) received May 10, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

8330. A letter from the General Counsel, Electric Rates and Corporate Regulation, Federal Energy Regulatory, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Designation of Electric Rate Schedule Sheets [Docket No. RM99-12-000; Order No. 614]—received May 2, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.

8331. A letter from the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, transmitting the Commission's final rule—Use of Electronic Media (RIN: 3235-AG84) received April 28, 2000, pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 801(a)(1)(A); to the Committee on Commerce.